

Faringdon Dramatic Society

presents



Affiliated to NODA

Faringdon Follies a celebration

800 years of Faringdon's market charter
and 70 years of Faringdon Dramatic Society

Wed 13th June

Thur 14th June

Fri 15th June

Sat 16th June

Buscot
Park
Theatre

www.faringdondramatic.org.uk

Faringdon Follies

2018 is a year of so many anniversaries. It is 100 years since the end of the First World War and 100 years since women first got to vote; it's the 100th birthday of the RAF and the 70th of the NHS. Locally though, there are two particular anniversaries that we just have to celebrate: the **800th** Anniversary of Faringdon being given its Market Charter in 1218 and Faringdon Dramatic Society, founded in 1948, has its **70th** birthday.

FDS wanted to celebrate both these events but how, we wondered, should we go about it? We're a drama group, not an historical society and our audiences want to see entertainment, not come to a lecture. How does a drama group put on a show? Perhaps it would be interesting to show our audience what goes on backstage as well as in front of the curtain. So we decided to tell the story of how we developed this production, one that celebrates Faringdon past and present, through songs, sketches, poems and short plays, as well as some wonderful photographs and film of our lovely home town. "Faringdon Follies" is the resulting show and of course, where could be better than Lord Faringdon's own theatre to perform it!

Carolyn Taylor & Debbie Lock

Act 1

Our Town, from 1200 to 1900 AD

Act 2

Our Town, from 1900 to the Present Day

There will be an interval of about 20 minutes between acts when refreshments will be served in the Badminton Court.

Cast (in order of speaking):

Jo Webster
Jan Crowdson
Duncan Sinclair
Verity Roberts
Jeni Summerfield
Peter Webster
Richard Lock
Martin Waymark
Joan Lee
Adrian Wells
Jack Metcalfe
Jacob Bayliss
Matthew Warner
Alison Morris
Carole Tappenden
Janie Eyre-Brook
Helen Thrower

Devised and directed by
Debbie Lock and Carolyn Taylor

Production Team:

Producer	Gary Field
Stage manager	Derek Crowdson
Lights and sound	Steve Greening, Gary Bates
Set	Peter Webster
Costumes	Jeni Summerfield, Joan Lee
Pictures	Dave Headey
Publicity	Adrian Wells
Programmes	Dave Headey
Front of house manager	Katie Dyet

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following authors and copyright holders for permission to use their work in Faringdon Follies:

- *Colonel Lisle's Decision* by **Peter Webster**
- *The Ballad of Hampden Pye* by **Ian Bateman**
- *In the Presence of the Lord (excerpt)* by **Bob Canning**
- *Pigeons In The Park* - adapted from a Tom Lehrer song by **Duncan Sinclair**
- *Memories of The Folly* - **Peter Webster, Val Hughes, Sjoerd Vogt, Tom Sutton, Jane Rennells**
- *Faringdon Folly Film* by **Tom Woodward**

We would like to thank these people who have given us permission to use their photographs:

Ian Bateman
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John Townsend
Sjoerd Vogt
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Sofka Zinovieff

Apologies if anyone has been missed out.

And we'd also like to thank:

- **Faringdon United Church** for rehearsal facilities,
- **The Gifted Magpie** for ticket sales,
- And all FDS members who have helped with Front of House.

Our Two Directors

Debbie Lock

Debbie has been with FDS for over twenty years – she has appeared in a variety of productions and has directed several plays and pantomimes, most recently **Cider With Rosie** last November and also **Side Effects** here at Buscot Park in 2016. She was last on stage as Sir Veillance in the award-winning panto **Arthur's Adventure** and before that you may have spotted her “mirror image” in the 2016 panto **Happily Ever After**. Another of Debbie's talents is choreography and when she has not been directing a panto has often been responsible for the dance moves.



Carolyn Taylor



Carolyn joined FDS in 1986 and has been Chair of the Society three times. She has directed and appeared in many productions for FDS and other companies, including a number of open air Shakespeare productions, most recently **Macbeth** and **Midsummer Night's Dream** at Oxford Castle and The Dell, Stratford upon Avon in 2016. Other highlights include playing Aunt Ada Doom in **Cold Comfort Farm** and Madame Ranevskaya in **The Cherry Orchard**. To her list of talents she can add that of playwright, being the author of the pantomime **Beauty and the Beast** in 2009 and **Reflections 1914-18** in 2014.

Buscot Park Theatre

Set in the East Pavilion on the east side of Buscot House. Buscot Park's theatre dates from the 1930s. It seats 64 in a raked auditorium with purpose-built armchairs covered in fire-proof velvet. The vaulted ceiling provides excellent acoustics and an audio system is available for the hard of hearing.

There is an orchestra pit below large enough for 20, and a podium can be raised for the audience to see the conductor. A Steinway “baby grand” piano is kept in the wings. Full stage lighting is available as well as a digital audio-visual display system.

Use of the theatre is by kind permission of the Faringdon Collection Trust, Lord Faringdon, and James & Lucinda Henderson.

Profiles of some of Faringdon's buildings

The Old Town Hall



Built in the 17C, it was a hive of activity on market days when farmers' wives would sell their surplus eggs, butter and cheeses under the shelter of the meeting room above.

The first town jail was a tiny room in one corner with a very small, high window as a peep hole in the door.

The town's first fire fighting appliance, the parish pump as it was called, was housed under the Market Hall, and the bell to summon the crew was erected over the ridge of the roof. The town ambulance was also garaged here for a time, after the Cottage Hospital was opened in the 1890s.

When Lord Berners purchased Faringdon House and the estate, he declined to buy the Hall as it needed a lot of repairs, so the seller gave the building to the town as a home for the war memorial to the fallen of the First World war. (and later WWII)

The Corn Exchange

Built in 1863 on the site of the Green Dragon Inn at the junction of Cornmarket and Gloucester Street, its exterior has been described as "in a funny debased Gothic with a totally unmonumental, asymmetrical front".

Up and to the right of the main door on a projecting plinth, stands the town's only outdoor sculpture, a draped female figure.

The present scheme of paint and fabric is relieved for the upwards-looking by foliated stone corbels beneath the main roof timbers and ten sculpted circular reliefs including a railway locomotive contemporary with the opening of the Great Western Railway terminal in Park Road.



The Pump House

This community building was originally a Bank. (you can still see the name faintly on the stone). It later became the Institute and Services Club (1950s and 1960s) and its later use was a Community Centre. After this period it fell into disrepair but was refurbished c 2006 at a cost of over £500k. It currently houses the town's Tourist Information Centre.

The building is on lease to the town from Lord Faringdon, Buscot Park.

All Saints Church



The central tower rises stumpily above the roofs of the nave and long chancel. A stone pavement leads up to the splendid c13 south door (huge iron hinges of "agitated scrollwork", several branches ending with dragons' heads) which opens into the south aisle. The round-arched nave of five bays is Norman, the capitals of its six columns decorated with axe rather than chisel; the clerestory windows, corbel frieze and flat buttresses outside the west end all point to the twelfth century.

Of the substantial monument to Sir Henry Unton, the bombardments of 1645-1646 have left only the large inscribed wall tablet and the life-size kneeling effigy of his widow.

On the south wall of the transept is encased an iron cannon ball from the Civil War bombardments.

The Folly

The Folly Tower, built on Folly hill, by Gerald Tyrwhitt Wilson, 14th Baron Berners (1883-1959) in the 1930s. It is said to be the last Folly to be built in England.

Lord Berners wanted the tower built in Gothic style, which the architect, his friend Lord Gerald Wellesley, hated. Lord Berners went on holiday to Rome, leaving Wellesley to start the building; on his return he found that Wellesley had built all but the last 10 feet in a classical style.

Lord Berners was angry and insisted that the remainder be built in Gothic style.

The brick built tower is 100 feet high, and has 154 stairs to the top. The cantilevered wooden staircase is now supported with metal poles.



Faringdon House

The present house was begun about 1780, near the site, north of All Saints' Church, of the old house which had been heavily damaged during the Civil War.

The town gate, with good piers of c.1700, leads to the south entrance front of five bays. Even in evening sunshine, it is a dull stuccoed block, raised on a terrace in a flanking of trees at the end of a long stretch of mown grass.

It has two storeys and five bays; over the attic storey, a hipped roof interrupted by the pediment. The interior, not open to the public, has a "fine" entrance hall and some "elegant" stucco work. The orangery and the park (with lake, summer house and monolithic Egyptian statue) were once occasionally opened to the public.



Faringdon Dramatic Society

Since its formation in 1948 Faringdon Dramatic Society has mounted over 150 productions, ranging from pantomime to dramas, comedies and Shakespeare. We have carried off a number of awards including the NODA Flame Award for **Heroes** in 2010: 'for inspirational contribution to the pursuit of excellence in Theatre'. **The Crucible** (2001) and **Dancing at Lughnasa** (2004) both won best drama production in London and the South East area from NODA.

We have won four of the last five pantomime competitions run by the Oxfordshire Drama network. The most recent was for **Arthur's Adventure**, last year's panto.

Our current membership is 60, but new members are always welcome, and there are opportunities for backstage and front of house personnel as well as actors.

Watch out for our next production in November: **The Farndale Avenue Townswomen's Guild – Murder Mystery**, a hilarious comedy directed by Jo Webster. Venue and dates have yet to be finalised.

For up to date details of the Society or membership please visit our website:

www.faringdondramatic.org.uk

*Catch up with Faringdon Dramatic Society at Follyfest! We will be presenting a one-off, radio style, performance of the hilarious one act play **Last Tango In Little Grimley** on Sunday afternoon, 29th July, in The Pump House. Watch out for further details on our website and in the Follyfest programme.*